

REMARKS

In the Office Action of January 9, 2009, the drawings were again objected to “because conventional features illustrated in the drawing as rectangular boxes must be labeled for understanding in this application. See 37 CFR 1.83(a).” In addition, claims 1, 5, 9 and 14 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, first paragraph, as allegedly failing to comply with the written description requirement. Furthermore, claims 1-9, 11-17 and 19 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over U.S. Patent Application Number 2003/0007473 A1 (hereinafter “Strong et al.”) in view of U.S. Patent Number 6,577,229 (hereinafter “Bonneau et al.”). Claim 18 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over Strong et al. in view of Bonneau et al. and in further view of U.S. Patent Number 5,610,947 (hereinafter “Balasubramanian et al.”). Claim 20 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over Strong et al. in view of Bonneau et al. and in further view of U.S. Patent Application Number 2002/0024421 A1 (hereinafter “Kang”).

With respect to the drawing objection, Applicants respectfully note again that requiring labels to “make the drawings and the claim language easier to, read and understand the applicant’s invention,” as asserted on pages 2 and 3 of the Office Action, is not valid under PCT Rule 11.11 since making “the drawings and the claim language easier to, read and understand the applicant’s invention” cannot be equated to being “indispensible for understanding” (emphasis added), as required under PCT Rule 11.11. Thus, Applicants respectfully assert that providing labels in boxes is not required in the current application and request that the drawing objection be withdrawn.

With respect to the Section 112, first paragraph, rejections, Applicants have amended claims 1, 5, 9 and 14 to remove the term “only” from these claims. As such, Applicants respectfully request that the Section 112, first paragraph, rejections of claims 1, 5, 9 and 14 be withdrawn.

With respect to the Section 103 rejections, Applicants have amended the independent claims 1, 5, 9 and 14 to more clearly distinguish the claimed invention from the cited references of Strong et al., Bonneau et al., and Kang. Support for the claim amendment can be found in the Specification, for example, at page 11, lines 10-15 and in Fig. 1. In addition, claim 20 has been canceled, and claims 2, 6, 12 and 16 have been amended. As amended, Applicants respectfully assert that the independent claims 1, 5, 9 and 14 are not obvious in view of Strong et al., Bonneau et al., and Kang, as explained below. In view of the claim amendments and the following remarks, Applicants respectfully request that the pending claims 1-9 and 11-19 be allowed.

A. Patentability of Amended Independent Claims 1, 5, 9 and 14

As amended, the independent claim 1 recites the limitations of “*the second signal-processing means being configured to code and decode the signals using one of a non-return-to-zero code and an FM zero code for the contactless station-station communication*” and “*a transmission coil electrically connected to the first signal-processing means to transmit the signals for the contactless station-transponder communication from the first signal-processing mean and to receive the signals for the contactless station-transponder communication to be processed by the first signal-processing mean, the transmission coil being also electrically connected to the second signal-processing means to transmit the signals for the contactless station-station communication from the second signal-processing mean and to receive the signals for the contactless station-station communication to be processed by the second signal-processing mean.*” As explained below, the teachings of Strong et al., Bonneau et al., and Kang do not render the amended independent claim 1 obvious. As such, Applicants respectfully request that the amended independent claim 1 be allowed.

As noted on page 4 of the Office Action, the cited reference of Strong et al. teaches a system that includes a plurality of interrogators 6 and tags 2, where the interrogators 6 communicate with the tags 2 using spread-spectrum and the interrogators 6 communicate with each other over LAN using the Ethernet protocol. In addition, as correctly stated on page 6 of the Office Action, the cited reference of

Bonneau et al. discloses that “the Type B smart card communication protocol, uses a Non-Return-to Zero modulation with a subcarrier at 847. kHz” (emphasis added). However, as noted above, the Non-Return-to Zero modulation described in Bonneau et al. is used for “smart card communication protocol,” that is, for communication between a station (smart card communication device) and a transponder (smart card), not for communication between stations. Thus, it is not obvious to apply the Non-Return-to Zero modulation described in Bonneau et al. for communication between the interrogators 6 (stations) of Strong et al., which supports the conclusion that the amended independent claim 1 is not obvious in view of Strong et al., Bonneau et al., and Kang.

With respect to the claimed “*transmission coil*,” the cited reference of Kang merely teaches the use of an antenna coil 160 for communication between an RFID reader 10 and an RFID tag 20. The cited reference of Kang fails to teach using the antenna coil 160 for communication between RFID readers. Thus, Kang fails to teach the limitations of “*a transmission coil electrically connected to the first signal-processing means to transmit the signals for the contactless station-transponder communication from the first signal-processing mean and to receive the signals for the contactless station-transponder communication to be processed by the first signal-processing mean, the transmission coil being also electrically connected to the second signal-processing means to transmit the signals for the contactless station-station communication from the second signal-processing mean and to receive the signals for the contactless station-station communication to be processed by the second signal-processing mean*,” as recited in the amended independent claim 1, which further supports the conclusion that the amended independent claim 1 is not obvious in view of Strong et al., Bonneau et al., and Kang. Thus, Applicants respectfully assert that the amended independent claim 1 is not obvious in view of the cited references of Strong et al., Bonneau et al., and Kang. As such, Applicants respectfully request that the amended independent claim 1 be allowed.

The above remarks are also applicable to the amended independent claims 5, 9 and 14, which also recite limitations similar to those of the amended independent claim 1. Thus, the amended independent claims 5, 9 and 14 are not obvious in view of the cited references of Strong et al., Bonneau et al., and Kang. As such, Applicants

respectfully request that the amended independent claims 5, 9 and 14 be allowed as well.

B. Patentability of Dependent Claims 2-4, 6-8, 11-13 and 15-19

Each of the dependent claims 2-4, 6-8, 11-13 and 15-19 depends on one of the amended independent claims 1, 5, 9 and 14. As such, these dependent claims include all the limitations of their respective base claims. Therefore, Applicants submit that these dependent claims are allowable for at least the same reasons as their respective base claims.

Applicants respectfully request reconsideration of the claims in view of the remarks made herein. A notice of allowance is earnestly solicited.

Petition is hereby made under 37 CFR 1.136(a) to extend the time for response to the Office Action of January 9, 2009 to and through June 9, 2009, comprising an extension of the shortened statutory period of two months (\$490).

Respectfully submitted,
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